



Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)

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NEWS AND EVENTS

- **See How Your State Ranks on Asthma — View the State Honor Roll 2012.** The [State Honor Roll of Asthma and Allergy Policies for Schools](#) is an annual research project of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) to identify states with the most comprehensive and preferred statewide public policies supporting people with asthma, food allergies, anaphylaxis risk and related allergic diseases in U.S. elementary, middle and high schools.
- **Participate in an Upcoming Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in Schools Webinar.** Wintertime means more time indoors, which also means more exposure to allergens and asthmagens, especially from indoor pests. Join this EPA webinar to learn about seasonal opportunities to control indoor pests in schools and best practices for effective pest management interventions. The webinar will be held **November 28, 2012, at 12 p.m. ET.** [Register today!](#)
- **Attend the 2012 Greenbuild International Conference and Expo.** The 2012 Greenbuild, to be held **November 14–16, 2012**, in San Francisco, Calif., is expected to be the largest one in history, attracting more than 30,000 attendees. The conference will include K-12 education sessions focused on a variety of school issues, including sustainable learning spaces, energy monitoring and green building. [Register today!](#)
- **Participate in an Upcoming Webinar on School Environmental Health.** Join EPA to learn how your school or school district can create a healthy environment for students by implementing a sustainable and comprehensive environmental health program. The webinar will also feature highlights, tips and strategies from established state programs. The webinar will be held **November 7, 2012, at 2 p.m. ET.** [Register today!](#)

Did You Know

There are **new tools and resources** available to help you host a **successful school event**.

The inaugural School Health and Indoor Environments Leadership Development Summit (SHIELDS) event brought together over 80 school health leaders to discuss the future of the healthy schools movement. Since then, EPA's Healthy Indoor Environments in Schools Initiative has developed a new [SHIELDS Web page](#) to showcase all of the materials, resources and photos from the event.

Visit this new page to learn how to make your events [more impactful](#) and to show your support for this initiative by signing a [Declaration of Commitment](#), just as all of the participants of SHIELDS did.

Access Previous Connector E-Newsletters Online

Can't find a previous *IAQ Tools for Schools* Connector e-newsletter in your email inbox? No problem! Visit the [e-newsletter archive](#) on the *IAQ Tools for Schools* website to access printable versions (PDFs) of all past editions.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATING CRITTER-FREE SCHOOLS

“There are many parallels between best practices for good indoor air quality management and pest management. Both are essential for healthy schools and can reduce asthma incidences for our children. Twenty percent of the U.S. population, nearly 55 million people, spends most of their days in our elementary and secondary schools. In our schools, children may be unnecessarily exposed to biting insects, cockroach and rodent allergens, and pesticides. Integrated Pest Management is a cost effective approach that reduces exposure to pests and pesticides.”

– Sherry Glick, National Pesticides and Schools Coordinator, EPA’s Office of Pesticide Programs

Pest management is an integral part of a comprehensive [IAQ management program](#). Common pests found in schools or on school grounds include flies, cockroaches, yellow jackets, ants, spiders, mice and termites. Droppings or body parts of cockroaches and other pests can trigger [asthma](#) in sensitive students and staff. Certain proteins are found in cockroach feces and saliva and can cause allergic reactions or trigger asthma symptoms in some individuals.

Although pesticides can help control pests, they need to be used carefully. Children may be more sensitive to pesticides than adults. Young children may be particularly susceptible as they can encounter pesticides while crawling, exploring or through hand-to-mouth activities.

What is Integrated Pest Management (IPM)?

[Integrated Pest Management](#) is a safer and usually less costly option for effective pest management in schools. A school IPM program employs **common sense strategies** to reduce sources of food, water and shelter for pests in your school buildings and grounds. IPM programs take advantage of all pest management strategies, including careful use of pesticides when necessary. IPM relies on a combination of the following:

- Low-impact pesticides.
- Comprehensive information about pests.
- Available and economical pest control methods.
- Safety considerations for people, property and the environment.

Review the list below to learn more about implementing IPM practices and policies at your school. If you have any further questions on IPM in schools, reach out to an [EPA IPM Regional representative](#) in your area.

7 STEPS TO ESTABLISH AN IPM PROGRAM FOR YOUR SCHOOL

IPM provides schools with an economical and environmentally-friendly alternative to control and prevent pest problems. To get started on establishing an IPM program at your school, tailor the steps below to meet your school’s specific needs; set appropriate objectives and thresholds to implement a successful [pest management program](#).

Should we have our schools tested for radon? How do we keep mold from returning once it has been removed?

Find answers to these and other questions on the Schools IAQ Connector Email Discussion List. **Join today** by sending a blank email message to schools_iaq_connector-subscribe@lists.epa.gov. Then check your email inbox for confirmation and membership details.



- **Step 1: Develop an official IPM Policy Statement.** The statement should demonstrate the district's support for an integrated approach to pest management and outline methods to educate and train staff, store pesticides, notify parents and school occupants of pesticide applications, and keep accurate records. This policy statement can also act as a guide for the IPM manager while developing an IPM program.
- **Step 2: Designate specific roles for pest management personnel, school occupants and key decision-makers.** For example, encourage occupants to keep their areas clean, encourage [parents](#) to learn about IPM practices and follow them at home, designate a qualified person to be the pest manager, and gain the support of decision-makers who control the funds for IPM projects. Establish methods for good communication among these groups of people, and educate or train them in their respective roles.
- **Step 3: Set specific pest management objectives for each site.** Tailor each objective to the site and situation. Examples of objectives for school buildings include preserving the integrity of building structures or preventing interference with the learning environment of the students. For school grounds, your objective may be to provide safe playing areas and the best possible athletic surfaces.
- **Step 4: Inspect site(s) to identify and estimate the extent of pest problems.** Identify potential pest habitats in buildings and on school grounds and develop plans to modify the habitats (for example, exclusion, repair and sanitation). Establish a monitoring program that involves routine inspections to estimate the size of the pest population and track the success of the habitat modifications.
- **Step 5: Set thresholds for taking action.** These thresholds are the levels of pest populations or site environmental conditions that require remedial action. It is important to consider sensitive individuals when setting thresholds.
- **Step 6: Apply IPM strategies to control pests when you reach an action threshold or to prevent pest problems.** These strategies may include redesigning and repairing structures, establishing watering and mowing practices, and storing pesticides in well ventilated areas. Refer to the [IPM Checklist](#) for a list of possible strategies for indoor and outdoor sites as well as information on safe pesticide use and storage.
- **Step 7: Evaluate the results of your IPM practices to determine if pest management objectives are being met.** Keep written records of all aspects of the program, including records for state and local regulations.

School administrators, IAQ team members and others involved in creating healthy indoor school environments can use the [IPM Checklist](#) within the *IAQ Tools for Schools* Action Kit to ensure your district develops an official IPM policy; designates pest management roles; inspects, identifies and monitors pests; develops preventative strategies; and evaluates results. This Checklist is also available in [Spanish](#).



GET ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

Is there a topic you want to see covered in an *IAQ Tools for Schools* Connector e-newsletter? Do you have suggestions for a webinar or e-newsletter feature, or do you have questions about a specific IAQ topic? If so, send us an email at IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com.

Share YOUR news and events! Send us information to share with the school IAQ community. It could be featured in the next Connector e-newsletter. Email your news and events to IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com.

The *IAQ Tools for Schools* guidance is a comprehensive resource designed to help schools maintain a healthy environment in school buildings by identifying, correcting and preventing IAQ problems. Learn more about the *IAQ Tools for Schools* guidance at <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools>.